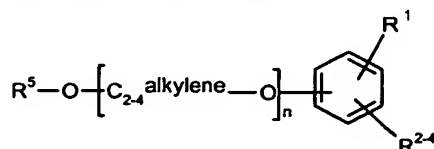


CLAIMS

1. A process for the preparation of an oligonucleotide which comprises the assembly of an oligonucleotide attached to a solid support, wherein the solid support is prepared by a process comprising polymerisation of a monomer which comprises a protected hydroxypolyC<sub>2-4</sub> alkyleneoxy chain attached to a polymerisable unit wherein the protected hydroxypolyC<sub>2-4</sub> alkyleneoxy chain contains from 2 to 10 C<sub>2-4</sub> alkyleneoxy groups and wherein the hydroxypolyC<sub>2-4</sub> alkyleneoxy chain is protected with an acid-labile protecting group, preferably an optionally substituted trityl group.

2. A process according to claim 1, wherein the solid support is prepared by a process comprising polymerisation of a monomer of formula (1)



wherein

R<sup>1</sup> is an optionally substituted ethylene group;

R<sup>2-4</sup> are independently hydrogen, hydrocarbyl, halogen, or hydrocarbyloxy;

R<sup>5</sup> is an optionally substituted trityl group; and

n is 2 to 10.

3. A process according to claim 2, wherein R<sup>1</sup> is para to the group of formula R<sup>5</sup>-O-[C<sub>2-4</sub>alkylene-O]-, R<sup>1</sup> is an unsubstituted ethylene group, R<sup>2-4</sup> are each H, the C<sub>2-4</sub> alkylene group is -CH<sub>2</sub>CH<sub>2</sub>- and n is 4.

4. A process according to any preceding claim, wherein the polymerisation occurs under conditions to produce cross-linking.

5. A process according to any preceding claim, wherein the oligonucleotide is assembled by the phosphoramidite approach.

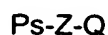
6. A process according to any preceding claim, wherein the oligonucleotide is attached to the solid support via a cleavable linker.

7. A process according to claim 6, wherein the cleavable linker is a succinyl, oxalyl or trityl linker.

8. A process according to any preceding claim, further comprising cleaving the oligonucleotide from the solid support.

9. A process according to claim 8, wherein the oligonucleotide is deprotected prior to, concomitant with, or after, cleavage from the solid support.

10. A composition of matter having the formula:



wherein:

Ps represents a polymer obtained by a process comprising polymerisation of a monomer which comprises a protected hydroxypolyC<sub>2-4</sub> alkyleneoxy chain attached to a polymerisable unit wherein the protected hydroxypolyC<sub>2-4</sub> alkyleneoxy chain contains from 2 to 10 C<sub>2-4</sub> alkyleneoxy groups and wherein the hydroxypolyC<sub>2-4</sub> alkyleneoxy chain is protected with an acid-labile protecting group, preferably an optionally substituted trityl group;

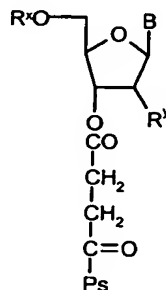
Z represents a single bond or a cleavable linker; and

Q represents H, a protecting group, a nucleoside or an oligonucleotide, provided that Q is not H when Z represents a single bond.

11. A composition of matter according to claim 10, wherein Z is a group of the formula -Y<sup>2</sup>-L-Y<sup>3</sup>, wherein Y<sup>2</sup> represents a single bond, -C(O)-, -C(O)NR<sup>17</sup>- or -C(O)O-, Y<sup>3</sup> represents a single bond, -C(O)-, -C(O)NR<sup>17</sup>-, -NR<sup>17</sup>-C(O)-, -C(O)O-, -O-C(O)-, -NR<sup>17</sup>- or -O-, R<sup>17</sup> is -H, a substituted or unsubstituted aliphatic group or a substituted or unsubstituted aromatic group and L is a bridging group.

12. A composition of matter according to claim 11, wherein L is a C<sub>2-4</sub> alkylene group.

13. A composition of matter according to claim 12 of the formula:



wherein  $R^x$  is an acid labile protecting group,  $R^y$  is H, F, allyl, OMe,  $OCH_2CH_2OMe$ , or hydroxy protected by a base labile or silyl-protecting group, and B is H, a protected adenine, guanine, or cytosine moiety or an optionally protected thymine, uracil or hypoxanthine moiety.